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THINK ON THESE THINGS

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'Don't Criticise, seek clarification' – Nigerian academic to Fredrick Töben, 1981

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TALMUD: – the fountain of Jewish racism and anti-Gentilism/Goyimism; remember, before anti-Semitism there was anti-Gentilism – David Brockschmidt

>Rather than launching Stukas and Panzers, the new invasion employed the obscurely portentous language of German phenomenology to pound the French, or at least a good number of intellectuals, into submission. ... In a word, the Jew is persona non grata not just in Hitler's world, but in Heidegger's world as well.< - Robert Zaretsky

Interestingly, in the above quotation Professor Robert Zaretsky, not reflecting on his own "battle-of-the-wills" technique used in his following article on Heidegger, employs the well-worn but still effective concept of "anti-Semitism" to separate himself from a philosophical thought structure that has moved beyond Judaic-Christian language-use.

As with Richard Wagner's works, the fact that he successfully transcends this Judaeo-Christian conceptual world in his operas has Wagner's critics pull out the "racist" and "anti-Semitic" cards in order for Jews to retain control of the Wagnerian Weltanschauung-world view. Unfortunately, because Wagner was a skull-splitting genius, and because he dared, among others, criticise Jewish behaviour, to retain control of the Wagnerian world view can only be achieved through brute force and state legal sanction. In this way Jewish intellectuals also retain control of their own world view, which ultimately rests on the *Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmud* wherein the win-lose death dialectic of Jew versus Goyim operates.

Christian thinkers, who cannot tolerate the fact that their belief system is derived from Judaism – is a sect of Judaism – use an inordinate amount of energy to separate themselves from this Talmudic thought structure. But some critical thinkers are now succumbing to it by using the conceptual framework adopted by the Catholic Church and are now openly referring to a Judaeo-Christian world view, as the current Roman Catholic Pope has done. The outsider in this worldview is, of course, the Muslim, the Islamic religion, which is the third pillar of the three monotheistic religions that has emerged out of Jerusalem-Al Quds. Current world politics reflect the

stirrings for absolutism-supremacism of these religious forces within the context of the "free democratic world", the emerging New World Order where international capitalism rules supreme!

Now a re-evaluation of Heidegger's thinking seems again to open up the flood gates of "anti-Semitism" and "Nazism", which will be used against anyone who disagrees with the Talmudic-inspired separation-supremacism movement.

That Heidegger made a positive comment about Adolf Hitler is, in the usual deceitful fashion, exploited to the full by Talmudists distorting and then projecting their own absolutist thought structure on the discourse. For example, Heidegger's remark to Jasper about Hitler's delicate hands should be augmented by the fact that Hitler had also written an opera and that the only person he admired amongst the immediate historical Germans was Richard Wagner and his music. That Karl Jasper condemned Heidegger's thinking as "unfree, dictatorial and incapable of communication", is, of course a nonsense.

No wonder Carl Jung described the emerging National Socialist movement as the rise of a new religion. That such a new political movement needs to compromise in order to grow is a truism that some theoreticians tend conveniently to forget. By using the Hegelian life-giving dialectic of win-win the National Socialists worked together with the Zionists in order to fulfil the Jewish dream of becoming a secular movement and thus to establish a Jewish homeland. The 25 August 1933 Transfer Agreement - *Ha'avara* - הַעֲבָרָה – still remains a problem for current "anti-German-Nazi-bashers" who wish to suppress this knowledge from the general public because it shows there existed collusion

between "Jews and Nazis". Of course, the "Holocaust" concept also serves well such a purpose, and with its narrative of distortions, fabrications and outright lies the current crop of Zionists deflect from this collusion fact. The Eichmann trial served to sacrifice a man's life in order to eliminate the right-wing political forces and consolidate the left-wing in Israeli politics.

Likewise, because of this political alliance between Germans and Jews, there are the purists pushing the Germanism line that has little time for Adolf Hitler and his National Socialists, of which [Georg Kausch](#) writes in his book, *Die unbequeme Nation. 2000 Jahre Wirtschafts- und Religionskrieg gegen die Deutschen – The irritable Nation. 2000 Years of Economic and Religious War against the Germans*.

It seems that what we saw emerging on the political battle field before and during World War Two had for another force, the mercantilists—financial globalists, begun to shape itself a hundred years before, by the beginning of World War One. And so we can speak of the 100-Year-War which, however, began even earlier when the Zionist theorist Theodor Herzl issued his program in the 1896 published book *Der Judenstaat*. The above overview indicates that, among other things, matters "Holocaust" serve the purpose of Jewish supremacism over the non-Jewish world. Multiculturalism policies and anti-racism legislation serve the purpose of fracturing nation states into easily controlled entities where Jewish Supremacism has a free reign, while in Israel itself, racist-politics are

practised that surpass in brutality even what the Germans attempted to do during World War Two. But to deflect from such Jewish barbarism it is convenient to continue to wheel out the tired and overloaded bandwagon of "Holocaust-Shoah" where non-Jewish guilt towards Jewish interests continues to grease its wheels. However, anyone who sees the evil residing only in Jewish thought structures falls for the trick of being manipulated into the still effective conceptual prison where "anti-Semitism" and "racism" – and "Holocaust denial" – rule supreme. In the majority of democratic nations these concepts are legally sanctioned, and from which there is no immediate escape because a rational discourse of their proper meaning is not permitted. Thus anyone charged with such is usually without a defence because TRUTH, the conceptual bedrock of our civilisation, is not permitted to operate as an arbiter of irrationality. Luckily, the Hegelian dialectic comes to the rescue here, and I formulated the following: 'Don't only blame the Jews, also blame those that bend to their pressure'. Those interested in an in-depth analysis of the "Jewish Problem" are advised to read [Professor Kevin MacDonald's](#) excellent trilogy: *The Culture of Critique, Separation and its discontents, A People That Shall Dwell Alone*.

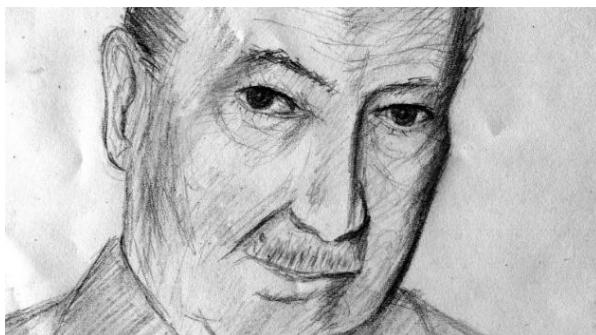
Now, enjoy and continue to think –

Fredrick Toben
Adelaide - 14 February 2014

Martin Heidegger's Black Notebooks Reignite Charges of Anti-Semitism

Philosopher Was Compromised By Involvement With Nazis

By [Robert Zaretsky](#), Published February 14, 2014, issue of [February 21, 2014](#).



Sketchy History: Heidegger's anti-Semitism has become the subject of new scrutiny. GETTY IMAGES

On this side of the Atlantic, the imminent publication in Germany of Martin Heidegger's "Black Notebooks" ("Schwarzen Hefte") has caused few if any ripples. For better or worse, the philosopher who theorized about "absence from the world" has been largely absent from our world.

Yet in Europe, a surf-like pounding in newspapers and magazines has accompanied the debate over the book's significance. Several phrases leaked from the book

have reintroduced some of the great questions about Heidegger: Namely, was he anti-Semitic and, if so, was his existential philosophy fatally compromised?

Oddly, the waves of controversy have crashed with greater fury in France than [Heidegger's](#) native Germany, not to mention the Anglo-American world. Of course, this in part reflects the waning, but still important role intellectuals play in French cultural and political life. This interest in turn inevitably spills into the national press, whose front pages have carried numerous interviews and columns on the controversy, leading one literary critic, Eric Aeschimann, to announce the arrival of the "new Heidegger Affair." As Aeschimann's phrase implies, there have been older Heidegger affairs — in fact, there has been a series, which tend to erupt every decade or so. The first dates from the immediate postwar period when France, scarcely liberated from one German occupation, threw open its doors to a new and different occupation. This was not a military occupation but an intellectual one

whose phenomenal nature, in every sense of the term, still stuns unsuspecting students of the era.

Rather than launching Stukas and Panzers, the new invasion employed the obscurely portentous language of German phenomenology to pound the French, or at least a good number of intellectuals, into submission. Of course, the strategist behind this campaign was none other than Heidegger. In 1946, a denazification committee at the University of Freiburg, reviewing Heidegger's decision to join the Nazi Party, and his activities as the university's rector between 1933-1934, decided to ban him from teaching. Perhaps the most damning witness was the philosopher Karl Jaspers, who had reluctantly concluded that his former friend's manner of thinking was "unfree, dictatorial and incapable of communication." (One wonders if, as he wrote this letter, Jaspers recalled the conversation he had with Heidegger soon after Hitler came to power. When Jaspers demanded to know how someone as "uneducated" as Hitler could rule Germany, Heidegger replied: "It's not a question of education; just look at his marvelous hands.")**

Yet, it was the hand offered by the French philosopher Jean Beaufret that pulled Heidegger from the professional exile imposed by the Freiburg committee. Shortly after Jean-Paul Sartre, whose own thought was inspired by Heidegger's work, gave his celebrated public talk "Existentialism is a Humanism," Beaufret contacted Heidegger for his reaction. While Heidegger replied that Sartre had completely misunderstood his writings, this was less important than the public's misunderstanding of Beaufret's motivations. As the Heidegger scholar Richard Wolin notes, Beaufret, who had fought with the Resistance, soon gravitated towards the dark planet of Holocaust denial. In a letter he wrote to the notorious negationist Robert Faurisson, Beaufret reassured him that he, like Faurisson, had "traveled the same path" and had been "considered suspect for having expressed the same doubts" about the gas chambers.

In the same letter, Beaufret congratulated himself for having shared his views with Faurisson, and never committing them to paper. The same cannot be said for his work on behalf of Heidegger: Beaufret morphed into a veritable public relations firm for the Nazi thinker, serving as his privileged interlocutor and interpreter in France. While Sartre soon distanced himself from Heidegger's writings, other and younger postwar intellectuals like Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault were drawn to them; they became the darling of self-described revolutionaries on the left rather than reactionaries on the right. For good reason, Heidegger chuckled that when the French talk philosophy, they think in German.

Only toward the end of the century did French intellectuals begin to grasp how odd a bedfellow Heidegger truly was. They had applauded his critique of

modernity and man's alienation from a world dominated by science and technology, but only later became appalled by his embrace of irrationality and scorn for the humanist tradition. In 1987, a former student of Heidegger's, Victor Farias, published a book whose title — "Heidegger et le nazisme" — reflected the damning contents within. Based on thorough archival research, Farias revealed that Heidegger's decision to join the Nazi Party was not, as his defenders claimed, opportunistic, but instead principled. More intriguingly, Farias claimed that Heidegger quit his position as rector at Freiburg just a year after he was named not because, as Heidegger later claimed, he was shocked to learn the true nature of the Nazi agenda. Instead, Farias argues, Heidegger stepped down when he realized that the original purity of the Nazi agenda had been diluted for political reasons.

The book sparked a firestorm in France. Francois Fédier, who had picked up the torch from the recently deceased Beaufret, flew to Heidegger's defense, while others like Jacques Derrida flew in a different direction, conceding Heidegger's philosophical affinities to Nazism but insisting that only those steeped in his writings can take the true measure of this thought. (Not only did this, in Derrida's eyes, disqualify Farias, but also reviewers like me.) Yet others like André Glucksmann, while they found Farias's analysis wanting, agreed that the value of Heidegger's thought, and not just his politics, was deeply suspect.

The controversy, which revealed that a growing number of French philosophers were no longer thinking in German, was repeated nearly a decade later with the publication of Emmanuel Faye's "Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy." Faye offered a more refined and rich reading of Heidegger's thought than did Farias, but one even more damning. He traced the connections between the *völkisch* themes in both Heidegger and Nazi ideology and the shared conviction that only a return to a presumably earlier and more authentic existence can save us from the spiritual wasteland wrought by modernity. Nothing short of a revolution, both for the individual and for society, could make an adequate clearing in the world to allow for being to, well, once again become. Heidegger, concluded Faye, understood that this revolution was garbed in the brown uniforms of Nazi Storm Troopers. Blasted by Fédier and his followers in 2005, Faye — in a recent essay for *Le Monde* — reminds his readers of what Farias and other researchers long ago documented: Heidegger was anti-Semitic. In a letter to a colleague in 1935, he deplored the presence of "Jewish and half-Jewish students" in his classes, and in his seminars declared that "Semitic nomads" were impervious to the German spirit, which moreover was threatened by what he called the process of "Jewification."

Warning that we cannot judge the "Black Notebooks" until they are published, Faye nevertheless notes that the published excerpts blacken the already dark portrait of Heidegger. In these fragments, Heidegger refers to a "world Jewry" with a "pronounced talent for calculation." Such a people, for Heidegger, are ontologically challenged: Unlike the German nation, Jews will always be "uprooted from Being-in-the World." In a word, the Jew is *persona non grata* not just in Hitler's world, but in Heidegger's world as well. "Will there be anything new in the "Black Notebooks?" scholars have been asking. While we wait to answer

this question, we might also ask if there will be a truly new perspective adopted by Heidegger's stalwart defenders in France.

Robert Zaretsky is a professor of history at The Honors College at the University of Houston and is the author of "A Life Worth Living: Albert Camus and the Quest for Meaning" (Harvard University Press).

<http://forward.com/articles/192664/martinheideggersblacknotebooksreignitecharges/#ixzz2tKqS9wY6>

Geoffrey Robertson and Michael Kirby: on Australia and Gandhi

RICHARD KING, [THE AUSTRALIAN](#), FEBRUARY 15, 2014 12:00AM



Geoffrey Robertson and Michael Kirby. Picture: Renee Nowyta
Source: News Limited

ALTHOUGH an expatriate, I am not an ex-patriot," writes human rights barrister Geoffrey Robertson in his introduction to *Dreaming Too Loud*, a collection of essays spanning 30 years and touching on subjects as diverse as drones, Lady Chatterley's Lover and Julian Assange.

It's a point on which he insists more than once, perhaps because, as well as living in Britain, he sounds as if he were born and reared in one of its stately homes. (Satirical magazine *Private Eye* once described him as "an Australian who has had a vowel transplant".) Nevertheless, his patriotism is sincere, and all the more interesting for being based not on jingoism but on a love for Australia's best traditions of fairness and social democracy.

Of course, we have other traditions, too, and Robertson does not seek to deny or downplay them. The legacies of racism are a key concern, as is Australia's shonky record on censorship and freedom of speech.

But while *Dreaming Too Loud* is shot through with an awareness of what Robertson calls "the downunderdogs", this awareness is itself an expression of his commitment to equality and social justice, and of his belief that equality and social justice are central to the Australian experience.

"We never seem to boast about how we pioneered universal suffrage and votes for women and maternity allowances," he writes in a piece published for the bicentennial, "how we invented the secret ballot and the basic wage, how the miners at Broken Hill achieved the 35-hour week for workers in dangerous jobs 50 years before that idea caught on overseas." For Robertson, Australians should pride themselves on those times when they have been most mindful of others. Above all,

he urges his readers to rethink the category of "Great Australian".

Rejecting the cult of Ned Kelly in favour of his contemporary, teacher Tom Curnow, who put his life on the line to stop the bushranger committing a particularly violent robbery, Robertson sends his intelligence out in search of those "distinctive moral visions" that define, or should define, Australia.

As a lawyer, he is especially interested in what legal scholars call "Grotian moments". Named for Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius, a Grotian moment is where a value or principle is proclaimed, as it were, ahead of its time, but acts as a sort of intellectual beacon by which future generations are able to navigate.

One such is Captain Arthur Phillip's First Law, which asserted, in 1787, many years before the abolition of the slave trade in Britain, "there will be no slavery in a free land and hence no slaves". Another is governor Lachlan Macquarie's refusal to discriminate against emancipists.

For Robertson, such moments are more than symbolic; they underpin the rights it has been his life's work to propagate and protect.

It is Robertson's explication of that work that makes this collection of essays invaluable. Bringing his enormous experience to bear on the cases of Mohamed Haneef, David Hicks and Assange, he charts the moral and legal slippage that has occurred since September 2001 and the way in which the language of war has encroached on the language of law.

Such slippage, he argues, is catastrophic not only for those who are denied their rights but also for those who presume to deny them. Referring to the way in which the fight against terrorism has been "squeezed into a war-law paradigm", he suggests the US and its allies should be very careful in their arguments, lest they are hoist by their own Hellfire missile. "If it is lawful to kill bin Laden, al-Zawahiri, and Hamas commanders," he writes in *Send in the Drones*, "then it must equally be lawful for them to kill their opposite numbers."

Casuistry, here, is self-defeating; as Robertson puts it in his essay on Hicks: "The advent of new forms of terror and new forces to inflict it on the innocent challenges democratic societies to respond with legal processes that do not abandon our cherished values."

That those values are now enshrined in international law and the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** is, Robertson reminds us, thanks partly to an Australian: **the jurist and parliamentarian HV "Doc" Evatt, who from 1948 to 1949 was president of the UN General Assembly.** (Eleanor

Roosevelt once suggested that Australia had done more than any other country to develop and define the principles set out in the Universal Declaration.)

It is thus a source of some frustration to Robertson and many of his liberal colleagues that Australia itself still stubbornly refuses to adopt its own bill of rights or charter. In his 2009 essay, *The Great Charter Debate*, Robertson makes the case for such a bill and even includes his own "Statute of Liberty". I doubt very much that the Australian government will be adopting this statute any time soon, but it is to be sorely hoped that, in framing it, Robertson has engineered his own "Grotian moment".

One of the pieces in **Dreaming Too Loud** is on Robertson's compatriot Michael Kirby. By all accounts (including Robertson's) Kirby is rather irritated by his reputation for "judicial activism", which he regards as code for left-wing bias. No doubt it is, but that Kirby attempted not only to apply the law but also to effect a change in how, and in whose interests, it was interpreted is surely not to be gainsaid.

Now the former High Court judge has written **What Would Gandhi Do?**, the subject of which, it may be relevant to note, was not only one of the 20-century's greatest activists but also a Middle Temple lawyer.

For Kirby, Gandhi is less a guru than a guide, a man whose approach to the important things in life may have lessons for the way we live and think now. Thus, he identifies four key issues - women's rights, climate change, animal rights and sexuality - to which Gandhi's teachings are, in his view, relevant.

(Interestingly, he leaves to one side the question of nonviolent civil disobedience - the principle/tactic on which Gandhi's reputation as a political leader is substantially based.)

Kirby then proceeds to demonstrate, briefly, in what ways those teachings are relevant. It is here the book runs into trouble. In my view, George Orwell was right to characterise "the Mahatma" as a brave and gifted man but one whose views are almost wholly irrelevant to anyone who favours modernity over backwardness or reason over superstition.

Kirby puts the kindest spin he can on Gandhi's batty views on technology, marriage, sex and food, but batty those views remain.

Do Gandhi's calls to dismantle the railways really amount to a "cautionary message" about the "urgent need for ecological restraint"? Or were they the musings of a religious crank?

In his essay on Gandhi, Orwell wrote that saints should be judged guilty until proven innocent. In Kirby, Gandhi finds a sympathetic judge, and one with a peerless reputation. But Gandhi was a great political leader, not a great philosopher. In any case, and on this occasion, I beg leave to record a dissenting opinion.

Dreaming Too Loud:
Reflections on a Race Apart
By Geoffrey Robertson
Vintage, 453pp, \$34.95

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What Would Gandhi Do?
By Michael Kirby
Penguin Specials, 70pp, \$9.99

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Richard King is the author of
On Offence: The Politics of Indignation.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/review/geoffrey-robertson-and-michael-kirby-on-australia-and-gandhi/story-fn9n8qph-122682707110>

Gandhi and Hitler

Here is material that Michael Kirby failed to include in his book, and Richard King was, no doubt, aware of its existence as he must have been of Gandhi's habit of sleeping naked with his underage nieces so as to test his moral resolve not to become sexually aroused. The following material is transcribed from a video clip: **Hitler And Mahatma Gandhi Talk**

Gandhi in letters to the Führer:

Friends have been urging me to write to you for the sake of humanity. But I have resisted their request, because of the feeling that any letter from me would be an impertinence.

We have no doubt about your bravery or devotion to your fatherland, nor do we believe that you are the monster described by your opponents.

That I address you as a friend is no formality.

I remain

Your sincere friend

(signed) M.K. Gandhi

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In a letter to George Orwell:

Hitler didn't just come about out of the blue. The conduct of the jews in Germany during and after World War I helped create the condition for Hitler's rise." ... the salvation of the jews lies in their committing collective suicide.

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Asked to clarify this last remark Gandhi replied:

..... suffering voluntarily undergone will bring jews an inner strength and joy. If the jewish mind could be prepared for voluntary suffering, even the massacre I have imagined could be turned into a day of thanksgiving. It is a joyful sleep to be followed by a waking that would be all the more refreshing for the long sleep.

And what of Gandhi's grandson, Arun?

This "holocaust" is something the Jews have been unable to shed. It is a very good example of how a community can overplay an alleged historic experience to the point that it begins to repulse friends.

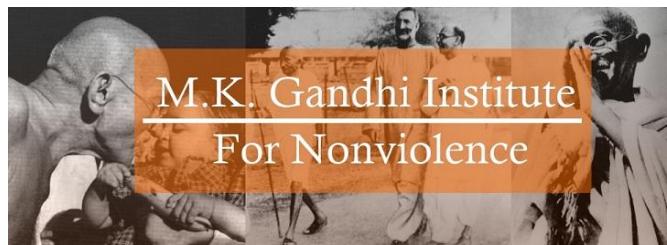
The Jews don't befriend anyone, they dominate them. They have created a Culture of Violence that will eventually destroy humanity.

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Abe Foxman, renowned Europhobic, Islamophobic, Jewish Supremacist anti-Gentile, commenting on Arun:

I think it's shameful that a peace institute would be headed up by a bigot.

*** Arun Gandhi**



<http://www.gandhiinstitute.org/>

Because of his remarks, Arun Gandhi was removed from his position as president of the M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence at the University of Rochester in America, the institute he himself had co-founded with his wife Sunanda, in 1991. University president, Joel Seligman, personally enacted the dismissal. [Wikipedia](#) claims Arun apologized and resigned for making remarks about Israelis and their treatment of the Palestinians.

Here is *The Age* report of the fateful episode in Arun Gandhi's life when he suggested a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict:



Arun Gandhi. Picture: AP

March home, urges Gandhi grandson - Reuters, *The Age*, August 31, 2004

Ramallah – The grandson of Mahatma Gandhi has urged Palestinian refugees to march home from Jordan en masse, even if the Israelis opened fire and killed protesters, to shock the world into taking notice.

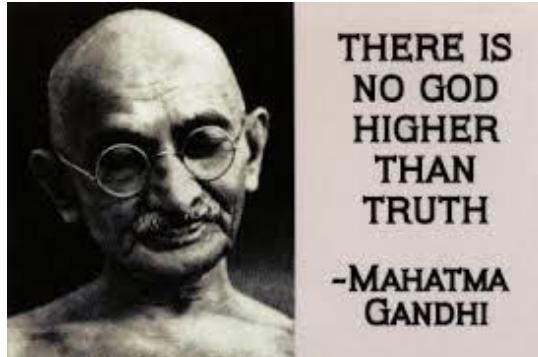
Arun Gandhi, above, whose grandfather helped end British control over the Indian subcontinent, proposed to the Palestinian Parliament a peaceful march of 50,000 refugees across the Jordan River and said MPs should lead the way.

"What would happen? Maybe the Israeli army would shoot and kill several. They may kill 100. They may kill 200 men, women and children. And that would shock the world. The world will get up and say, 'What is going on?' " he said.

Mr Gandhi compared Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza with the treatment of blacks under South Africa's white minority regime, saying Palestinians' fate was "10 times worse".

At least 700,000 Palestinians fled or were driven from home during the war that led to Israel's creation.

<http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2004/08/30/1093852180639.html>



Arun Gandhi was "violently" dismissed/resigned from his institute by the University of Rochester

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O49p-mdnX_0

More examples of bending to Jewish pressure follow, so, don't blame the Jews as non-Jews bend when the Jewish life-force viciously expresses itself. Shakespeare called it asking for the pound of flesh – yet how many have learned the lesson contained in *The Merchant of Venice*? Shylock's nature is to apply usury principles and thus destroy those who come to him then, for whatever reason, fail to fulfil the contract entered into

...thus, the Kantian Categorical Imperative takes effect: never a borrower be...and a new problem emerges because the creation of money is in whose hands? And now some more Wagner criticism from the Talmudic viewpoint which, of logical necessity, will be a hostile view because Wagner had the moral and intellectual courage to criticise anyone's behaviour. He refused to bow to Jewish pressure!

Ring of Truth

The Metropolitan Opera's new *Siegfried*, part of its ambitious *Ring* cycle, exposes the greatness—and the limitations—of Wagner and his admirers

By [David P. Goldman](#) | November 16, 2011 7:00 AM

Even those of us who cannot hear Wagner without recalling the Nuremberg rallies should make an effort to understand why Wagner changed the world. The young Gustav Mahler, often cited as a composer with a Jewish [sensibility](#), heard Wagner for the first time and wrote, "I understood that the greatest and most painful revelation had just been made to me, and that I would carry it unspoiled for the rest of my life." No other artist changed so many lives or so drastically changed the course of the culture. Writer Roger Scruton [says](#) that

Wagner's *Ring* is "surely the greatest drama composed in modern times"—fatuously in my view, but his view is widely held.

"At the beginning of this century there were people called Wagnerians," Hitler said in 1943. "Other people had no special name." He was right. Wagner did not invent the main themes of post-Christian culture—follow your bliss, invent your own identity, do your own thing, all you need is love—but he softened us up to accept them in the intimate dimension of music. We

continue to emulate him, above all in film. If we find Wagner in the original tedious, it is because the *Star Wars* series, the *Harry Potter* films, and a hundred other imitations have corrupted us with Wagner Lite.



Jay Hunter Morris as the title character in the Met's new *Siegfried*. Ken Howard/Metropolitan Opera

Like Caliban, Wagner set out to people this isle with Siegfrieds. He succeeded: Luke Skywalker is the most obvious knockoff, down to the battle with and redemption of the father figure. (Wotan almost says, "Siegfried, I am your grandfather!") Harry Potter is a younger Skywalker, except that unlike Siegfried, he doesn't murder Dumbledore. The most popular English novel of the 20th century, Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, is modeled on the *Ring* cycle, although Tolkien intended his epic as an [antidote](#) to Wagner rather than an imitation.

With the third installment of its [new](#) *Ring* cycle, the Metropolitan Opera has set a high-water mark for opera, featuring director Robert LePage's theatrical wizardry and a strong cast. LePage devised a 45-ton mechanical set for his *Ring* cycle, which debuted last September with the first opera of the tetralogy, *Das Rheingold*. It required extra reinforcement for the Met stage, the most expensive thing the Met has ever undertaken; estimates of the cost of this cycle range up to \$40 million. Much as one might wish that the Met had spent that money on Mozart and Verdi, the result is a marvel, despite occasional mechanical glitches including one in a subsequent *Siegfried* performance. Fortunately the big machine worked flawlessly at the Oct. 27 premiere. The set looks like a row of parallel planks, set at a 30-degree angle to the audience. As the prelude begins, the planks rotate to right angles, and we see the forest floor magnified in three-dimensional projection, with worms and insects crawling over the tree roots; it rotates again and transforms itself into the primeval forest. The Nibelung dwarf Mime takes the infant Siegfried from his dying mother Sieglinde, along with the shards of the sword Nothung. With another rotation, we see Mime's cavern smithy next to a shimmering pool fed by a small

waterfall. The morphing stage and the high-definition projections are magical.

But it is not just LePage's shape-shifting set that lures us into the enchanted forest; it is Wagner's music. The rhythm of a tapping anvil grows as if from primal chaos in the timpani and low winds, while a rising figure in the brass—it is the music of the Nibelung hoard—builds to a climax. Under the baton of a James Levine, the longtime Met music director now sidelined by injury, it is chilling; conductor Fabio Luisi made it sound like the Nibelungen waltz, but we will save the bad news for last.

The good news is that the Met offered the strongest cast for *Siegfried* in many years, headed by Jay Hunter Morris in the title role. The young heroic tenor from Texas can summon the requisite vocal brass when required but has a convincing lyrical side as well. And I cannot recall a Siegfried who looked and acted the part so well. He compares well to the leading interpreters of my lifetime: René Kollo, Siegfried Jerusalem, Jess Thomas, and James King. Opposite Morris was Deborah Voigt, one of the great dramatic sopranos of our time. The Welsh baritone Bryn Terfel sang Wotan beautifully, as he always does. Gerhard Siegel as Mime, Eric Owens as Alberich, and Patricia Bardon as Erda sang and acted wonderfully in their respective roles.

It was good enough to recall the Jewish joke about the old woman who receives a letter from her son containing horrendously awful news. "But does he write beautiful Hebrew," she sighs. "It's a pleasure to read." Wagner's news is that the West will burn, and murderous thugs like Siegfried will run wild. But the Met presented it so beautifully that it was almost a pleasure to hear.

Mime has raised Siegfried to kill the dragon Fafner, who sits upon the hoard of the Nibelungs, including on a magic ring that can make its owner master of the world. Wotan, the god of laws, had stolen the hoard to pay the giants who built his fortress, Valhalla, and the Nibelungs want it back. But Mime cannot forge the shards of Nothung. The young Siegfried will do so himself and kill Fafner as well as Mime and go on to claim as his bride the Valkyrie Brünnhilde, who lies sleeping on a mountain surrounded by magic fire.

Siegfried will overthrow Wotan with the words, "All my life an old man has stood in my way," and replace the rule of law with the rule of unrestrained impulse, which Wagner calls love. He and Brünnhilde (who is Wotan's daughter) shall be the redeemer and redemptrix of the world, replacing the old order of covenants with the new order of do whatever feels right. Everybody dies at the end, but they do so following their bliss.

To understand Wagner's convulsive impact on the culture, one must hear his work in the theater. We have become accustomed to what he called *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or the total work of art, through film, which holds us captive and controls our

visual and auditory perceptions. Wagner demands that we subject our senses to his control for many hours. (*Siegfried* begins at 6 p.m. and, with two intermissions, ends near midnight.)

The destruction of the covenantal world by impulsive strength, Wagner's great theme, also involves an even subtler change in our perception of time. Western classical music subordinates individual events to a musical goal, and our perception of time depends on our progress to that goal. In the hands of the great composers, time itself can be compressed or distended for expressive reasons, but it always remains intact. In the *Ring* cycle, the thread of time spun by the Nordic fates, or Norns, figuratively breaks to herald the end of the old order. Wagner uses musical sleight-of-hand to evoke the illusion of a break in the continuity of time as well.

Wagner's music usually is explained through his use of leading motifs, or *Leitmotiven*, short musical phrases that refer to characters or concepts.

The [Wagnerheim](#) website guides the interested listener through each use of these motifs in the cycle. – Darth Vader's "Dum, dum-dum dumb, dum, dum-dum" and Indiana Jones' "dee-de-dee-dee, dee-dee-dee" are the idiot grandchildren of the *Ring*. There is something in this procedure of the handworkers' staging of "Pyramus and Thisbe" in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which one actor holds up brick and mortar to show that he is playing the Wall, and another holds a lantern and horns to show that he is playing the Moon.

If Wagner did nothing better than this, we would laugh off his music as a curiosity. But he was far cleverer than the musicologists. His musical aim is to subvert our sense of purpose. Part of this he accomplishes through what he calls "endless melody," in contradistinction to classical form. The trouble is that if a melody has no end, it doesn't have a middle, either, or any intermediate parts. "Endless melody" risks becoming an endless blah; Nietzsche wrote that the technique leads to "the complete degeneration of rhythmical feeling" and "chaos in the place of rhythm." But Wagner, again, is cleverer than this. He stitches together short musical numbers that point to a tonal goal, but he changes track before the goal is reached and heads in a different direction. Wagner, that is, creates expectations in the way that an audience familiar with classical form had come to expect, but artfully subverts them. To succeed, Wagner's manipulation of musical time requires an audience that knows classical form.

A canny conductor maintains a high degree of metrical flexibility throughout, a sense of rhythmic ambiguity such that the Wagnerian change-up pitch appears as a smooth transition. Luisi, newly appointed the Met's principal conductor, seemed uncomfortable with the score, especially in the first act. He conducted each segment with metronomic regularity, shifting abruptly

into the next one; perhaps he was afraid of losing control of the orchestra and hung on to the beat all the more tenaciously. The overall effect resembled a potpourri of incomplete waltzes, polkas, foxtrots, and tarantellas more than endless melody. Luisi relaxed a bit during the second and third acts; this was the opera's opening performance on Oct. 27, and the Italian conductor, replacing the great Wagnerian Levine, might have been nervous.

The *Ring* cycle's pivotal moment comes when Siegfried shatters his grandfather's spear, traverses the magic fire, and [awakens](#) the sleeping Brünnhilde. "The whole world exists just to ensure that two such beings may gaze on each other," the composer wrote, and the cleverest music in the cycle is reserved for their first encounter.

Siegfried's kiss is accompanied by a grand orchestral gesture on a B-major 7th chord, preparing a quite conventional resolution to E minor, that is, the sort of cadence from the 5th scale degree to the tonic that we hear in every piece of Western music. But Wagner has a trick up his sleeve: The E-minor chord, blown in a grand fortissimo by a steroidal brass section, isn't a resolution at all. The top note of our E-minor chord in the brass choir resolves upward to C (pianissimo in the strings with harp accompaniment), so that we hear the E-minor triad not as a tonic chord, but as passing motion to C major. (Click [here](#) for my audio explanation with musical examples at the piano. Readers unfamiliar with musical terms might skip the explanation below and listen to the audio example instead.)

That is a piece of musical sleight-of-hand worthy of Siegfried and Roy. After first hearing it, we reinterpret what we have heard; the E-minor triad was not a point of resolution, as Wagner had tricked us into hearing, but only the preparation for something else. The real tonal goal, C major, is announced grandly in arpeggios in the harps (Wagner wanted six; the Met had four).

In Western music, we expect the leading tone (the 7th step of the scale) to rise to the topic ("si" rising to "do") to achieve stability. Reversing the direction of the leading tone (with "do" falling to "si") is a conventional gesture in popular music. We hear it in songs like "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," "Puff the Magic Dragon," and "Both Sides Now." It evokes nostalgia; instead of "going home" to the tonic as "si" rises to "do," we move away from home, so to speak.

Wagner's climatic gesture is something like "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" in reverse. We thought we had arrived at one tonal goal (E minor), but to our surprise, we find ourselves in a different place altogether. Wagner evokes in purely musical terms a sense of waking from sleep. As the leading tone rises to the tonic in its delayed resolution, we return from dream to reality.

Wagner's grandiose gesture, laboriously prepared, twice repeated, and underscored by the full resources

of his orchestra, stops time dead in its tracks: At the C-major tonality on "Sonne," we have to stop and reinterpret where we are. Exultation in the moment replaces dedication to a goal. Of course, Wagner had to cannibalize the musical techniques of goal-oriented music in order to subvert it.

Siegfried, Act III, Scene III

Siegfried and Brünnhilde have something in common with Siegfried and Roy: Once you know how the trick is done, it's much less fun to watch. The better I understand Wagner's music devices, the less I want to hear the music again, and I present this brief example in the hope that it will spoil your appetite as well.

Why, then, did the young Mahler and so many other arbiters of culture get so gooey over Wagner? The young Mahler felt his life changed; the mature Mahler said, "There is Beethoven and Richard, and after them, nobody." W.H. Auden called Wagner "perhaps the greatest genius that ever lived." And Wagner's great apostle in the English-speaking world, George Bernard Shaw, said, "Most of us are so helplessly under the spell of his greatness that we can do nothing but go raving about the theater in ecstasies of deluded

admiration." Hitler had a lot of company. One can sit such people down at the piano and show that a single late Schubert sonata has more tonal originality than the whole Wagner corpus, to no avail. They will continue in their ecstasies of deluded admiration.

The reason so many clever people adore Wagner, I suspect, is the same reason that I raved about him as an antinomian adolescent: Wagner makes sensuous their desire to be free of the constraint of covenants, to give themselves to the moment rather than dedicate themselves to goals. In that sense Wagner is far more revolutionary than Marx, who read Aeschylus and Shakespeare at home: Wagner asserts the right of strength to remake the world according to caprice. Wagner delivered the cultural message of the 20th century more vividly than anyone else. That is why you should not miss the Met's brilliant *Ring* cycle. But try not to enjoy it.

<http://www.tabletmag.com/jewishartsandculture/music/83341/ring-of-truth>

Fredrick Töben's brief comments on David Goldman's Problem

Where to start, that is my problem. Let's just note a couple of points that came to my mind as I read the article, then in the second Goldman article, below, go into a little more detail.

>**Of course, Wagner had to cannibalize the musical techniques of goal-oriented music in order to subvert it.**<

Goldman, the absolutist, fears free expression, the hallmark of cultural creation, and the basic message of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*.

>**Endless melody" risks becoming an endless blah; Nietzsche wrote that the technique leads to "the complete degeneration of rhythmical feeling" and "chaos in the place of rhythm.**<

Nietzsche's hedonistic inversion, which safeguards itself through absolutist rationality, cannot cope with the liberation of the soul from imposed mental constructs. He would then be faced with his own personal sexual degeneration. Goldman does not seem to understand this process that Wagner solves musically.

Did Richard Wagner Inspire Hitler or Did He Inspire 'Star Wars'? And Does It Matter?

The whole question of modernity, in new assessments of the German composer and his work

By [Vladislav Davidzon](#) | February 12, 2014 12:00 AM

While Wagnerian fanatics undeniably include a contingent of what one critic memorably referred to as "leathery old Nazis," these are now no longer taken seriously. After a period of intense academic/historical skirmishing in the late 1980s to mid-1990s, recent advancements in Wagner studies scholarship have settled our understanding of the genealogical sources of

his ideas. His anti-Judaism belonged to the Utopian, anti-clerical family of the sort held by Marx and Bauer as well as drawing on the race theorists and social Darwinism circulating at the time: His overriding obsession with purity of German myth and language metastasized easily into a crusade for purity of race. Adorno's once crankish position that Wagner's work

was the decisive element linking the 19th-century rebirth of German Romanticism to the development of National Socialism now approximates something akin to received wisdom. Hitler's love for the work, epitomized by his identification with the character of the sensitive misunderstood (and eventually victorious) artist Walther von Stolzing in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (The Mastersingers From Nuremberg) is a *fait accompli* matter in the opera's patrimony and will most likely forever encrust the works with a grimy layer of infamy.



Collage Tablet Magazine; original images Wien Museum and Shutterstock

Given that Wagner's music has clearly stood the test of time, what remains is a host of delicate and unresolved questions about the implications of the composer's anti-Semitism and other toxic affinities: Was Wagner merely acting as a vessel for commonly accepted ideas? Are the anti-Semitic tropes interwoven into the formal properties of the music and operas themselves? If music, as Wagner's defenders often proclaim, cannot be fascist, what about the contents of the librettos? If the librettos are indeed not anti-Semitic, does that justify the lifting of Israel's unofficial ban on reciting his works? [Writing](#) in the *New York Review of Books* last summer, the conductor Daniel Barenboim, perhaps the most ardent living champion of Wagner's rehabilitation, began his eloquent vindication of the right to play Wagner in Israel with the observation that "perhaps no other composer in history sought to combine such obviously incompatible elements in his works."

A new exhibition [Euphoria and Unease: Jewish Vienna and Richard Wagner](#) up through March 16 at the Jewish Museum of Vienna, and a newly translated biography [Richard Wagner: A Life in Music](#), by German musicologist Martin Geck, both attempt to give new answers to these oft-asked questions. Both are sketchily ethereal and less stridently judgmental about Wagner's proto-Nazism than has recently been the case, perhaps auguring a new trend toward post-ideological enjoyment of the composer's work. Yet there remains no definitive consensus on what drove Wagner to become an anti-Semite in the first place.

The definitive scholarly examination for a general reader of Wagner's anti-Semitism remains Jacob Katz's 1986 monograph [The Darker Side of Genius](#), which ably enumerates the conventional narrative of how Wagner developed his ideas about and violent hatred of the Jews. The classical explanation lies in Wagner's deep resentment at the public success and facile genius of his two Jewish contemporaries in the German

musical world: Felix Mendelssohn and Giacomo Meyerbeer. That Mendelssohn was the wealthy and cosseted son of a banker, while Wagner grew up in the shadow of poverty and illegitimacy did not help matters either. At 18 Wagner sent his only handwritten manuscript of an early symphony to Mendelssohn. It was promptly lost in the mail—an accident that he probably blamed on the Jews. Despite his mixed feelings, Wagner only retroactively filtered his resentments through the lens of his rivals' Jewishness. He did so in his infamous 1850 essay "Das Judenthum in der Musik" (On Jewishness in Music), which was written under a pseudonym (tellingly it did not appear until after Mendelssohn's sudden death in 1847) and that he had republished under his own name two decades later.

A humiliating and unproductive sojourn Wagner took in Paris during his mid 20s didn't help much, either. Having fled his conductor's appointment at the court of Riga through the Russian border to avoid the clutches of his creditors (some of whom, yes, were Jewish), Wagner arrived in Paris with great hopes, but the French reaction to his work was dismissively cool. Wagner's only income in Paris came from the German Jewish music publisher Maurice Schlesinger, who commissioned him to correct musical proofs. Wagner bristled at the work, which was mostly of transcribing and collating the work of the now somewhat obscure French Jewish composer [Fromental Halévy](#). The cloying sycophancy of the young Wagner's letters to both Schlesinger and Meyerbeer make for uncomfortable reading, and the composer's resentment must have congealed into rancor after Meyerbeer rebuffed him.

Decamping from Paris he returned to Germany to witness the first stirring of the revolutions of 1848 and was promptly banished from Dresden for his part in that city's failed uprising. His enthusiasm for Utopian politics of redemption curdled into a romantic fantasia of escape from worldly corruption into a resurgent mythopoetic dreamworld that would regenerate a conservative society into belatedly accepting the poet-composer as its savior. Katz's own conclusion is that Wagner simply took himself too seriously, that "his consciousness of his brilliant originality in music seems to have given him a sense of confidence in his own judgment, even in areas in which he had very little knowledge at his disposal."

Wagner's latest biographer, Geck, worked on the *catalogue raisonné* of Wagner's works as well as the critical edition of *Parsifal* before writing *A Life in Music*. He faces the underlying problem of all of the dozens of Wagner biographers in trying to find the impossible balance between rehashing the events of Wagner's fabulously picaresque life and laying out the intellectual history/ideological critique and musicology. Geck's book falls squarely on the musicology corner of the intellectual-history/musicology axis. He is extremely perceptive in his explanation of the way Wagner used the echoes of Beethoven's and Bach's themes to synthesize an archaizing mood for his newly created genre of symphonic opera. Extremely spirited and fluid, the book nonetheless almost reaches a point of incomprehensibility to nonspecialists. (For a straight account of Wagner's life, minus the semiotics and references to Heidegger and Julia Kristeva, the general reader should turn to Barry Millington's [Wagner: The Sorcerer of Bayreuth](#).)

Geck also mostly avoids the second problem of Wagner biographies, which is whether to rely on Cosima Wagner's voluminous diaries and Wagner's self-serving autobiography by opting for a dizzily erudite interpretive approach, making

this perhaps the first postmodern Wagner biography. He more or less successfully defends Wagner's characters from the charge of being simple, anti-Semitic stereotypes of the wheeling, cringing, degenerate Jew by invoking the complexity and ambivalence with which Wagner imbued all of his characters, in operas that are about the specter of violent redemption through love.

Geck's excellent 2009 essay "[What Was Eating Wagner?](#)" makes clearer his allegiance to the "failed revolutionary" as the culprit for Wagner's turn to the Dark Side. I hope to be forgiven the pun, as Wagner did inspire *Star Wars*, which conjured a world of dueling feudalistic moralities that personified one side as an expression of inherent evil. Geck both concentrates attention on and elides a direct confrontation with the ideological place of anti-Semitism in Wagner's work by adding crisp, aphoristic "a word about" mini-chapters to the end of each of the book's 13 chapters. Each "a word about" discusses Wagner's relationship with or influence on a Jew, such as his self-loathing accompanist Josef Rubinstein.

The exhibition in the Vienna Jewish Museum exhibit showcases the expected Wagner collectibles, of which there are many, as Vienna housed some of the first, and most obsessive, Wagner societies. The show focuses understandably on his Vienna years and connections. Consequently and perhaps misleadingly, it focuses on minor quarrels and local characters in the Wagner saga. These include his wrangling with his Viennese seamstress Bertha Goldwag, and portraits of all-but-forgotten midcentury oddballs and racists such as Felix Mottl, Otto Weininger, Guido von List, or the pan-German radical [Georg Ritter von Schonerer](#). Wagner's relations toward Anton Bruckner can only be described as "snotty."

The show also focuses on Wagner's prickly relations with scornful contemporary music critics such as the Jewish critic Eduard Hanslick. Wagner blamed Hanslick for (what he wrongly perceived as) his lack of success, and after Hanslick got his hands on a trove of embarrassingly vain letters between Wagner and his seamstress, he published them with vindictive glee. The perennial problem faced by tempestuous personality types who collect enemies is in the risks of ascribing an essentialist group characteristic to one's enemies. Typically, Wagner failed to take note of the fact that not every music critic is a Jew and that, conversely, not every Jew is a music critic.

What the exhibit does extremely well is inculcating the facts of the sheer number of Jewish musicians and conductors that were instrumental in revealing Wagner's dark magic to the wider world as well as the ironic repercussions that dark magic wrought upon Viennese Jewry. (Mahler's first production after leaving Vienna for New York was conducting *Tristan and Isolde* at the Metropolitan.) The Viennese musical world—the

world of Mahler, Korngold, Arnold Schoenberg, Alexander von Zemlinsky—was decimated by the Anschluss. Reading the plaques and dates on the wall one cannot help but be shocked by how many Viennese Jews died in American exile.

As poised and thorough as the exhibit is, in another sense it is compromised by the adoption of an oddly over-solicitous tone—uncommitted to passing judgment on the master himself, his disciples, or anyone who appropriated his music for their own ideological ends. It also spares from rebuke the apolitical ordinary listeners who choose to revel in the primordial ecstasy of Wagner's operas while ignoring the unpleasant implications of his cosmology. Indeed, the exhibit is free to refrain from taking a position on Wagner by a calculated recitation of the judgments of others. It concludes as this essay began, with a meditation of the [Wagner ban in Israel](#), along with the presentation of dozens of epigrams about Wagner inscribed on the walls of the exhibit's final room.

Depending on one's sensibility, this culmination is either a curatorial sleight of hand or a daring, post-ideological invitation for debate. The quotes argue both the case for and the case against the rejection of the inherent putrescence of Wagner's legacy. The opinions range from the flippant and exculpatory to the outraged and damning. Some are mournfully apologetic, such as Gottfried Wagner's admission that the "ideology of Beyruth contributed to Hitler's rabid madness and everything that ensued from it." Several prominent Viennese critics and scholars protest both "right wing ideological" and "Israeli" appropriation of the music, demanding their right to enjoy it unmolested by the discomfort of complex emotions. We are reminded also of Woody Allen's immortal crack from *Manhattan Murder Mystery* that "I can't listen to that much Wagner. I start getting the urge to conquer Poland." Finally there is the recently deceased French Opera director Patrice Chéreau's simple declaration that "Wagner is not sacred."

Yet curiously absent from that wall are any of the epigrams from "Nietzsche contra Wagner." Looking at that wall there is one that I could not avoid recalling. Nietzsche knew full well what he was talking about when he predicted that "one has almost calculated the whole of the value of modernity, once one is clear concerning what is good and evil in Wagner."

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<http://www.tabletmag.com/jewishartsandculture/music/162481/richard-wagner-vienna>

Muted

Performances of Wagner's music are effectively banned in Israel. Should they be?

By [David P. Goldman](#) | August 17, 2011 7:00 AM

Richard Wagner, the most repugnant of musical nationalists, has become an unlikely poster child for culturally progressive Israelis. The recurring controversy over the public performance of work by the Nazi Party's favorite composer erupted again in late July when the Israeli Chamber Orchestra, led by the Austrian conductor Roberto Paternostro, [performed](#) a much-publicized Wagner program at the Bayreuth Festival in Germany, Wagner's self-erected shrine and a pillar of the Nazi movement well before Hitler took

power. (Paternostro [received](#) a standing ovation from the largely German audience, which understandably liked the idea of Jews playing Wagner.) Morbid ethnocentrism with overtones of nationalist extremism is acceptable to the Israeli left, it seems, as long as it isn't Jewish.

Every so often a prominent musician makes a point of sneaking Wagner into a public concert in Israel. Zubin Mehta, the Indian-born conductor of the Israel Philharmonic, played a Wagner excerpt as an encore to a 1981 concert; Daniel

Barenboim, conducting a German ensemble, did it again at the 2001 Jerusalem Festival. And in each case public opprobrium put Wagner's scores back on the shelf. At the Bayreuth concert, some of the Israeli musicians explained that they never would perform Wagner in Israel but felt free to do so elsewhere. Performance of Wagner's music is unofficially—but effectively—banned in Israel. But should it be? Mark Twain quipped that Wagner's music is better than it sounds. By the same token, banning Wagner's music is a better idea than it sounds. Suppressing the performance of important musical works is not a small matter, though, and deserves careful thought rather than emotional reflex.

Barenboim is Wagner's most passionate apostle with an Israeli passport (though the conductor also [claims](#) citizenship in "Palestine"). For years Barenboim has linked Israel's informal ban on Wagner performance to the occupation of the West Bank, which he likens to the Nazi occupation of Europe. In a January 2005 speech at Columbia University titled "Wagner, Israel, and Palestine," Barenboim excoriated the Zionist impulse that leads Israel to defend itself against cultural as well as military foes, arguing that peace will come only when Israel drops its defenses against both. The speech was a memorial to the late Edward Said, the Palestinian rejectionist who had arranged for Barenboim's "Palestinian" identity papers. In Barenboim's view, Israel should embrace the composer who wrote the theme music for the Third Reich, just as it should embrace Arab extremists who learned their anti-Semitism from the grand mufti of Jerusalem's pro-Hitler wartime [broadcasts](#) from Berlin.



Wagner in bronze, Bayreuth.
Johannes Simon/Getty Images

The fact that some Israeli Wagnerites are repugnant, though, doesn't justify banning Wagner's music. Their politics aside, the Wagnerites have a point: Why shouldn't a free country allow musicians to play whatever music they like? The "Horst Wessel Song" might be banned, but why exclude the music of a composer who died half a century before Hitler came to power?

Barenboim is arguably the most talented musician of his generation, if not always the cannier interpreter. But as a Wagnerite, he is no Wilhelm Furtwängler, the great mid-century maestro who in 1944 [conducted](#) Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in Berlin under an enormous swastika on the occasion of Hitler's birthday: Furtwängler's live recording of Wagner's "Ring" cycle remains the definitive interpretation to this day. The excellent Israeli conductor Asher Fisch, Barenboim's student, told me that he travels with that recording in his iPod. A Wagner specialist, Fisch has conducted "Ring" cycles from Adelaide, Australia, to Seattle, without, of

course, having the opportunity to pursue his main career interest at home in Israel.

The case of Richard Wagner is trickier than it seems at first sight. Contrary to the [headlines](#) about the Israelis at Bayreuth, Wagner was not "Hitler's favorite composer." That dubious honor accords to Wagner's acolyte Anton Bruckner, the unassuming Austrian church organist who was championed by anti-Semitic parties but who never had much to say about Jews one way or the other. To announce Hitler's death, German radio played the [Adagio](#) from Bruckner's Symphony No. 7, not "Siegfried's Funeral March." Zubin Mehta conducted the Israel Philharmonic in Hitler's favorite piece in 2007 at Lincoln Center without a murmur from the Israeli media. As a Jewish musician, I couldn't perform it; I can barely stand to listen to it. Hitler loved Wagner, to be sure, but after Stalingrad, he had understandable misgivings about a twilight of the gods—the subject of the concluding opera in Wagner's four-part "Ring" cycle. Why not prohibit Bruckner as well? And if anti-Semitism is a criterion for performance in Israel, why not ban Tchaikovsky, who hated Jews as much as Wagner did? Wagner did more than hate Jews, however: He proposed to cast them out of European culture in his infamous 1850 pamphlet "Jewishness in Music," which denounced the sublime Felix Mendelssohn and the great poet Heinrich Heine as uncreative imitators. His hatred of Jews seems to have had less to do with 19th-century racial theories than with the anxiety of influence. Wagner ripped off the scenario for his opera "The Flying Dutchman" from Heine and knocked off Mendelssohn's "Fingal's Cave" overture in the "Dutchman's" evocation of the sea. Wagner tried to cover his guilty tracks by denouncing Jewish composers he emulated, including Giacomo Meyerbeer.

Wagner was not just a Jew-hater, then, but a backstabbing self-promoter who defamed the Jewish artists he emulated and who (in Meyerbeer's case) had advanced his career. He hired Jewish musicians when they served his purposes, for example Hermann Levi, who conducted the premiere of his last opera, "Parsifal."

Privately, Wagner conceded that Mendelssohn was a genius. At home in Bayreuth, he played four-hand arrangements of Mendelssohn overtures with his wife, Cosima, the daughter of Franz Liszt. Robert Schumann had thrown Liszt out of his Dresden home at an 1848 dinner party after Liszt made disparaging [remarks](#) about Mendelssohn. Liszt hated Jews as much as Wagner did, but, unlike his son-in-law, he wasn't smart enough to steal material from them. His music never became important to the Nazis, in part because it is less compelling than Wagner's. Cosima lived until 1930, long enough to play den mother to the nascent Nazi movement. She sent care packages to Hitler's prison cell in 1923 after the Munich beer hall putsch attempt, and she sat her grandchildren on Hitler's lap. In the midst of so many musical anti-Semites, why single out Wagner?

The deeper problem may lie with Wagner's Israeli interpreters and defenders. Wagner knew perfectly well that his public disparagement of Jewish musicians was humbug. Not so Daniel Barenboim. In his 2005 Columbia [lecture](#), he said, "Wagner recognized that Jews were separated from society, spoke German with ugly accents and couldn't speak German music to the German Geist. ... Wagner's acceptance of the fact that the Jews were different from the Germans and [Theodor] Herzl's recognition of the fact was said with a sense of relief, but both recognized the Jews were a distinct and foreign group in Europe."

That is manifestly false; during Wagner's youth, the premier composer and poet in the land of music and poetry both were Jews, and Wagner borrowed liberally from both of them. It would be harder to explain why Barenboim repeated an anti-Semitic caricature that Wagner knew to be false if he had not also repeated an anti-Zionist caricature that Edward Said knew to be false. Barenboim himself apparently believes that these caricatures are true.

No one disputes Wagner's repulsive beliefs and behavior, and few dispute his importance as a composer. Is it possible "to divide the man from his art," as conductor Pasternostro **told** Israeli television in July? The bifurcation seems odd, for art is a mode of human interchange, not an emotionally neutral variety of tonal mathematics. Audiences still pack opera houses to hear Wagner in order to be stirred by the man communicating through his music. Wagner's attack on the classical form had a broader agenda, in which he linked classical form to the tyranny of convention and the despised biblical God. Classical form focuses the ear on a goal and subordinates all the elements of music to the motion toward this goal. It creates a sense of the future, which makes it possible to evoke suspense, surprise, and humor through musical means. Form is simply a means to create expectations, and without expectations there can be no surprise.

But Wagner was after something more radical: He proposed to do away with the covenantal order of traditional society. Nietzsche had him pegged. At first intoxicated with Wagner, he awoke with a hangover and wrote: "Whence arises all evil in the world, Wagner asked himself? ... From customs, laws, morals, institutions, from all those things on which the ancient world and ancient society rests."

He went on: "Wagner's heroines, once they have been divested of their heroic husks, are indistinguishable from Madame Bovary." But Wagner offers more than Emma Bovary with a soundtrack. The provincial French adulteress is a paragon of virtue next to Wagner's protagonists. In "Die Walküre," the second installment of his "Ring" cycle (presented last season at the Metropolitan Opera in a brilliant new production by Robert LePage), his lovers are twin siblings. With explicit reference to the legend of Narcissus, they fall in love with the person that they most resemble, namely each other.

If the covenant of marriage is the fundamental unit of covenantal society, Wagner proposed instead a transgressive regime of pure impulse. The purest and least complicated love, in Wagner's view, is love of self. His contemporaries found this exhilarating and built a cult around the composer.

Wagner was obsessed with overthrowing the Jewish God of Covenants. He did not so much hate Jews as individuals as hate everything the Jewish people represented. "The popes knew well what they were doing when they withdrew the Bible from the Folk," he wrote. "For the Old Testament in particular, so bound up with the New, might distort the pure idea of Christ to such a point that any nonsense and every deed of violence could claim its sanction. ... We must view it as a grave misfortune that Luther had no other weapon of authority against the degenerate Roman Church, than just this Bible."

That is what made Wagner the defining culture figure of Europe in its decay. In a 1943 dinner-table conversation, Hitler himself **observed**: "At the beginning of this century there were people called Wagnerians. Other people had no special name."

Without his music, to be sure, Wagner would have been one more obscure frog in the moral swamp whence the Nazis

emerged. But he invented a new musical language to embody the narcissistic impulse. What he accomplished was masterful, turning the tools of classical composition against their original purpose. If Wagner was evil, he was not in any way mediocre. His musical sleight-of-hand involves no more magic than a Penn & Teller show; I showed how some of his musical machinery operates in a 2009 **essay** for First Things magazine. That is a complex subject and requires careful study, but at bottom Wagner's musical devices are a special sort of prestidigitation.

Whether Wagner was a premature Nazi or the musical sweetheart of a gang of tone-deaf thugs is beside the point. Wagner mixed the compost heap in which the flowers of the 20th century's greatest evil took root. The old regime of covenants in which humanity accepts a higher law died out, not only because it had become sclerotic but because it was replaced by an alternative religion that offered the full sensuous experience of personal liberation. The Nazis embraced Wagner not by accident or opportunism but because they recognized in him the cultural trailblazer of the world they set out to rule.

It should not be the business of any state to impose moral criteria on artists; in that case one might ban Mozart's "Don Giovanni," which Beethoven thought immoral. Music students need to study Wagner. Students of cultural history need to hear Wagner, which means live performances with first-rate singers. The first two installments of the Met "Ring" last season may have set a new world standard for Wagner interpretation and should not be missed by anyone who wants to understand what happened to Western culture.

Art, nonetheless, does not reside in the clouds of Mount Parnassus. It has consequences in the real world in which ordinary humans live and suffer, and society in extreme cases must draw a line. Wagner may not have been the only anti-Semite among the composers of the 19th century, nor even the worst, but he did more than anyone else to mold the culture in which Nazism flourished.

The Jewish people have had no enemy more dedicated and more dangerous, precisely because of his enormous talent. In a Jewish state, the public has a right to ask Jewish musicians to be Jews first and musicians second.

With reluctance, and in cognizance of all the ambiguities, I think the Israelis are right to silence him.

David P. Goldman is Tablet Magazine's classical music critic and the Spengler columnist for Asia Times Online. **David P. Goldman**, Tablet Magazine's classical music critic, is the Spengler columnist for [Asia Times Online](#), associate fellow at the Middle East Forum, and the author of [How Civilizations Die \(and Why Islam Is Dying, Too\)](#) and the essay collection [It's Not the End of the World, It's Just the End of You](#).
<http://www.tabletmag.com/jewishartsandculture/music/75247/muted>

Fredrick Töben comments

1. Generally, like little children throwing a tantrum, some Jewish thinkers cannot bear it when non-Jews are admired.

>Richard Wagner, the most repugnant of musical nationalists,...<

- this does not make sense as Wagner died some 50+ years before the NSDAP came on the scene.

2. Goldman swings back and forth in his admiration, from repugnant then to Furtwaengler's genius in interpreting Wagner.

>The fact that some Israeli Wagnerites are repugnant, though, doesn't justify banning Wagner's music.<
>He is no Wilhelm Furtwängler (referring to Barenboim"), the great mid-century maestro who in 1944 conducted Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in Berlin under an enormous swastika on the occasion of Hitler's birthday: Furtwängler's live recording of Wagner's "Ring" cycle remains the definitive interpretation to this day.<

3. Of course Wagner was not capable himself - he had to steal from Jews, which is again Goldberg projecting his own moral failings on Wagner. Goldberg also fails to make the well-spring of Wagner's creativity anything Jewish, as he so desperately tries to illustrate in the following paragraphs.

For Wagner things Jewish were irrelevant or had to be improved and overcome - ueberwinden, and so Wagner unashamedly liberated himself from the Jewish mindset, a necessity if he was to create the Gesamtkunstwerk. Goldman forgets to mention that for most Jews the Babylonian Talmud is the moral/ethical guide, and that reeks of hatred, brutality and racism against non-Jews.

>Wagner did more than hate Jews, however: He proposed to cast them out of European culture in his infamous 1850 pamphlet "Jewishness in Music," which denounced the sublime Felix Mendelssohn and the great poet Heinrich Heine as uncreative imitators. His hatred of Jews seems to have had less to do with 19th-century racial theories than with the anxiety of influence. Wagner ripped off the scenario for his opera "The Flying Dutchman" from Heine and knocked off Mendelssohn's "Fingal's Cave" overture in the "Dutchman's evocation of the sea. Wagner tried to cover his guilty tracks by denouncing Jewish composers he emulated, including Giacomo Meyerbeer.<

>Wagner was not just a Jew-hater, then, but a backstabbing self-promoter who defamed the Jewish artists he emulated and who (in Meyerbeer's case) had advanced his career. He hired Jewish musicians when they served his purposes, for example Hermann Levi, who conducted the premiere of his last opera, "Parsifal." <

4. Jews set themselves apart from Europeans and that comes from Talmud. The current fraudulent multicultural policies attempt to hide this political Jewish supremacism in action.

"Wagner's acceptance of the fact that the Jews were different from the Germans and [Theodor] Herzl's recognition of the fact was said with a sense of relief, but both recognized the Jews were a distinct and foreign group in Europe."

5. Why were Wagner's beliefs repulsive but not theirs?
Think of circumcision and kosher killing, then think of

"The Hole in the Sheet", the idea that women are dirty and of lesser worth than men, the need to shave their heads and wear wigs instead, etc!

>No one disputes Wagner's repulsive beliefs and behaviour...<

6. Was Wagner right, i.e. for the Germanic mindset Talmud and other Jewish influences needed to be overthrown?

>Wagner was obsessed with overthrowing the Jewish God of Covenants. He did not so much hate Jews as individuals as hate everything the Jewish people represented. "The popes knew well what they were doing when they withdrew the Bible from the Folk," he wrote. "For the Old Testament in particular, so bound up with the New, might distort the pure idea of Christ to such a point that any nonsense and every deed of violence could claim its sanction. ... We must view it as a grave misfortune that Luther had no other weapon of authority against the degenerate Roman Church, than just this Bible".<

7. Goldman's language-use gives him away - yet he claims such moral superiority

>Without his music, to be sure, Wagner would have been one more obscure frog in the moral swamp whence the Nazis emerged<

>Whether Wagner was a premature Nazi or the musical sweetheart of a gang of tone-deaf thugs is beside the point. Wagner mixed the compost heap in which the flowers of the 20th century's greatest evil took root.<

Such guff from a music critic indicates and reflects the mental torment inherent in Goldman's mind as it confronts the works of a genius who dared make critical comments about Judaism and about Jewish people's behaviour. Wagner was highly critical of almost everyone who crossed his path, which indicates he did not single out only the Jews. The problem with the Jewish mindset is that it fluctuates between victimhood if it feels neglected and absolutism if it feels superior, which is the product of Talmudic win-lose dialectics. His "Nazi" fixation is nothing but an expression of unreflected hatred towards the Germans, and mixed with Freudian gutter fixations.

8. Some Jews can't bear anyone being more talented than themselves

>The Jewish people have had no enemy more dedicated and more dangerous, precisely because of his enormous talent. In a Jewish state, the public has a right to ask Jewish musicians to be Jews first and musicians second.<

If you want to know what is going on in the world, read a Jewish newspaper

'Quenelle' comic ordered to remove parts of Internet video

Anti-Semitic French provocateur suffers another legal setback in French court; different clip already blocked on YouTube

By AFP February 13, 2014, 9:50 am

In a ruling that will increase the pressure on the video-sharing website to ban the comedian from its platform altogether, a judge ruled that one of the passages breached French law on Holocaust denial and another one amounted to incitement to racial hatred. Dieudonne M'bala M'bala was given five days to remove the passages or face a penalty of 500 euros per day for each of them left online.

Stephane Lilti, a lawyer representing France's Union of Jewish Students (UEJF) which brought the legal action, said they would now ask public prosecutors to ensure that the court's ruling is enforced.

The UEJF said it would be approaching YouTube for talks over the steps the site should take to ensure that "they respect their legal obligations in future." YouTube, which has already withdrawn one Dieudonne video after he was convicted over its content, would not comment on whether it would be pulling the video — "2014 Year of the Quenelle" — that was the subject of Wednesday's ruling.

In the passage deemed to constitute Holocaust denial, Dieudonne claims to "know nothing about the gas chambers" but says he can organise a meeting for anyone interested with "Robert" — which the court accepted was a reference to Robert Faurisson, a notorious former academic who claims the systematic massacres of Jews in World War II never happened.

"In the context of previous statements by Dieudonne, some of which have earned him convictions for hate speech, defamation and incitement to anti-Semitism, it seems clear

that this reference amounts to disputing a crime against humanity," the judge, Marc Bailly, said in his ruling.

In the second contested section, Dieudonne insists he is not anti-Semitic then goes on to say he shouldn't be required to judge between "the Jews and the Nazis. I don't know what happened, who provoked whom, who stole from whom," he adds before delivering the punchline: "I've got my little idea, but... you know."

Dieudonne's lawyers said these comments were clearly humorous but their argument was rejected by the judge who said any humour involved was being put at the service of Dieudonne's beliefs and desire to test the limits of free speech. Thursday's court hearing was the latest battle in a war between Dieudonne and his supporters and opponents led by France's Socialist government.

The government succeeded in preventing Dieudonne from touring his latest show around the country but it has been unable to prevent him performing altogether and there is no sign of him becoming any less popular.

Last week, the 47-year-old was acquitted on charges related to another video in which he calls for the release of an Islamist militant serving life for the 2006 kidnap, torture and murder of French Jew Ilan Halimi.

The government has also targeted Dieudonne's finances.

Efforts to get him to pay more than 65,000 euros (\$90,000) in outstanding fines for his race hate convictions have led to a probe into suspected money laundering and misuse of company assets by the comedian.

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/dieudonne-ordered-to-remove-sections-internet-video/>

Prof Robert Faurisson replies 12 February 2014:

I am becoming... unnameable

Eric Delcroix, my former lawyer, has just reminded me that the late humorist Pierre Desproges (1939-1988), in a skit for the television show "Le Tribunal des flagrants délires" (The Court of in flagrante delirio), once portrayed me as an unnameable character, unnameable at least for the French justice system. Announcing the accused's appearance, the court usher let forth: "Mr Faurisson!", whereupon the presiding judge sprang: "No, not that name! It's forbidden!"

But that was only a comedy skit.

Most recently, French judicial reality has become stranger than fiction. According to an AFP press release, on Wednesday, February 12, 2014, in a case brought against him by the union of Jewish students of France (UEJF), the humorist Dieudonné was ordered to remove two passages from his new year's eve video "2014 sera l'année de la quenelle" (2014 will be the year of the quenelle), posted on his YouTube account and viewable at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0r4YQ54PazA&bpctr=1392482451>

Here is an extract: The Tribunal de Grande Instance of Paris considered in particular that one of the passages constituted a "disputing of crimes against humanity".

In his video Dieudonné says to a character [in fact, addressing Arno Klarsfeld]: "Myself, the gas chambers, I don't know anything about them. If you really want, I can arrange you a meet-up with Robert", alluding to the Holocaust-denying historian Robert Faurisson. In a suit submitted to it "en référé" (emergency procedure), the Tribunal de Grande Instance of Paris held that this passage was a "disputing of crimes against humanity".

A fine of 500 euros per day

In his ruling the judge considered that "the humour invoked by Dieudonné's defence appears to be but the means of publicly conveying beliefs in testing the limits of the freedom of expression, exceeded in the case at hand, and not the spirit of

a comical and provocative skit whose excesses might be allowed".

The decision imposes on Dieudonné a fine of 500 euros per day of delay in withdrawing either of the passages after five days from service of the ruling (AFP).

So here I am, deprived of a surname and even of a Christian name.

Desproges saw rightly. Orwell too.

Jewish Passengers on Belgian Train Told to Get off at Auschwitz

Loudspeaker message suggested they shower at the concentration camp

By [Stephanie Butnick](#) | February 11, 2014 3:06 PM

Jews on a recent train in Belgium were treated to a twisted announcement on the train's speaker system: that they should get off at Auschwitz and take a shower. JTA [reported](#) the bizarre incident, which is believed to have been the work of adolescents who stole the keys that operate the loudspeaker. The incident of Jan. 31 prompted the Belgian rail company SNCB to file a complaint with police over incitement to hatred, the RTL broadcaster reported Tuesday.

According to RTL, the suspects gained access to the speaker system during rush hour, at 5 p.m., while traveling from Namur to Brussels. One of the passengers said in French, "Ladies and gentlemen, we are approaching Auschwitz. All Jews are requested to disembark and take a short shower."

The most disturbing part of the story is that this has happened before, in 2012, on the same train line. "Welcome to this train heading to Auschwitz," the loudspeaker hijackers were reported to have said. "All Jews are requested to disembark at Buchenwald." Though why a hypothetical train to a concentration camp in Poland would need to deposit passengers in Germany is beyond me. Perhaps the train company could invest in a better security system, or at least a few geography lessons.

<http://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/162686/jewish-passengers-on-belgian-train-told-to-get-off-at-auschwitz>

Netanyahu wants EU to outlaw boycott of Israel Wednesday, 12 February 2014 13:13

European countries should enact laws to prohibit future boycotts of Israel; Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is reported to have said on Sunday.

Israel's Maariv newspaper published on Wednesday that the PM made the remarks during a meeting with senior officials, where it was suggested that European governments should put in place special laws to stop any future boycotts of Israel. Finance Minister Yair Lapid and Justice Minister Tzipi Livni were expelled from the meeting due to their unsupportive positions to the PM's plan. Full details of the meeting remain a secret. Israel has officially joined JUSCANZ; a UN grouping which advises the UN Human Rights Council and has become an observer at the Pacific Alliance; a bloc of five South American countries. Netanyahu said Pacific Alliance will open new commercial markets for Israel with the bloc which represents the eighth largest economy in the world. Israel's Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman welcomed his country's admittance saying: "Next time you hear talk about political isolation or a wave of boycotts which threaten Israel, you will know that the reality is far from it.

"Israel continues to be a leader and has the best minds in the world and we will continue to strengthen and improve our relations with the international community."

President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz, who is visiting Israel said on Tuesday, said the EU is not boycotting Israel and that the "boycott does not solve the problem".

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/europe/9713-netanyahu-wants-eu-to-outlaw-boycott-of-israel>

Pro-Kremlin lawmaker: Jews destroyed Russia

By JTA, 02/14/2014 14:58

Oleg Bolychev, calls detractors during debate: "Jews, mired in opposition"; says "Jews destroyed Russia in 1917, and 1991."

(JTA) — A local politician from the party of Russian President Vladimir Putin has accused Jews of destroying Russia.

The accusation by Oleg Bolychev, a legislator from the ruling United Russia party at the regional parliament in Kaliningrad, was made in the parliament on Feb. 6, according to the Regnum news agency, which reported on it on Thursday.

During a debate, Bolychev called his detractors "Jews, mired in opposition," adding: "You destroyed our country in 1917 and you destroyed our country in 1991."

The Russian Jewish Congress condemned the lawmaker, saying it was indignant over the statement and calling on authorities to investigate it.

Bolychev also came under fire from colleagues within the ruling party, some of whom called for him to be expelled.

"It is incredible that a public figure can make such extremist statements," lawmaker Alexander Khinshtein told the AFP news agency.

Bolychev has rejected accusations that his remarks were anti-Semitic and decried claims of extremism as "ravings and provocations".

"I was not talking about Jews but about the situation in the country. I was speaking about traitors who destroyed a great state twice," he said.

<http://www.jpost.com/Jewish-World/Jewish-Features/Pro-Kremlin-lawmaker-Jews-destroyed-Russia-341463>

Putin:

First Soviet government was mostly Jewish

By JTA, 06/20/2013 03:51

Russian president says predominantly Jewish Soviet government was guided by false ideological considerations.

Putin was referencing the library of Rabbi Joseph I. Schneerson, the late leader of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement. The books, which are claimed by Chabad representatives in the United States, began being moved to the museum in Moscow this month.

According to the official transcription of Putin's speech at the museum, he went on to say that the politicians on the predominantly Jewish Soviet government "were guided by false ideological considerations and supported the arrest and repression of Jews, Russian Orthodox Christians, Muslims and members of other faiths. They grouped everyone into the same category.

"Thankfully, those ideological goggles and faulty ideological perceptions collapsed. And today, we are essentially returning these books to the Jewish community with a happy smile."

Widely seen as the first Soviet government, the Council of People's Commissars was formed in 1917 and comprised 16 leaders, including chairman Vladimir Lenin, foreign affairs chief Leon Trotsky and Joseph Stalin, who was in charge of the People's Commissariat of Nationalities.

<http://www.jpost.com/Jewish-World/Jewish-News/Putin-First-Soviet-government-was-mostly-Jewish-317150>



Abe Foxman's Retirement: A TOO Retrospective, Part 1

[Kevin MacDonald, February 14, 2014](#)

Abe Foxman is [retiring from the ADL](#) as of July, 2015. He's had a very successful career pursuing Jewish interests, from unqualified support for Israel to strictly enforcing the ban on assertions of White identity and interests. The ADL is an 800-lb. gorilla of American politics and culture, pulling in [\\$53 million in 2011](#); his salary of [\\$688,188](#) should ensure him a comfortable retirement.

Read on at:

http://www.theoccidentalobserver.net/2014/02/abefoxmansretirementatoo retrospectivepart1/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+theoccidentalobserver%2Ffeed+%28The+Occidental+Observer%29